

Notes and Description of the Previously Unknown

Male of *Syntaxis libocedrii*

(Hymenoptera : Syntexidae)

WOODROW W. MIDDLEKAUFF

University of California, Berkeley

In a recent shipment of siricids sent to me by Mr. Boyd E. Wickman¹ for identification were eight males and seven females of the extremely rare *Syntaxis libocedrii* Rohwer.

Rohwer (1915) based the original description of this species upon two females from Rose Camp, Georgetown, El Dorado County, California which were reared from the incense cedar, *Libocedrus decurrens* Torr. Prior to the recent collections of the specimens here reported, only the two females from the type series and an incompletely labeled female from the Modoc National Forest have previously been known to me.

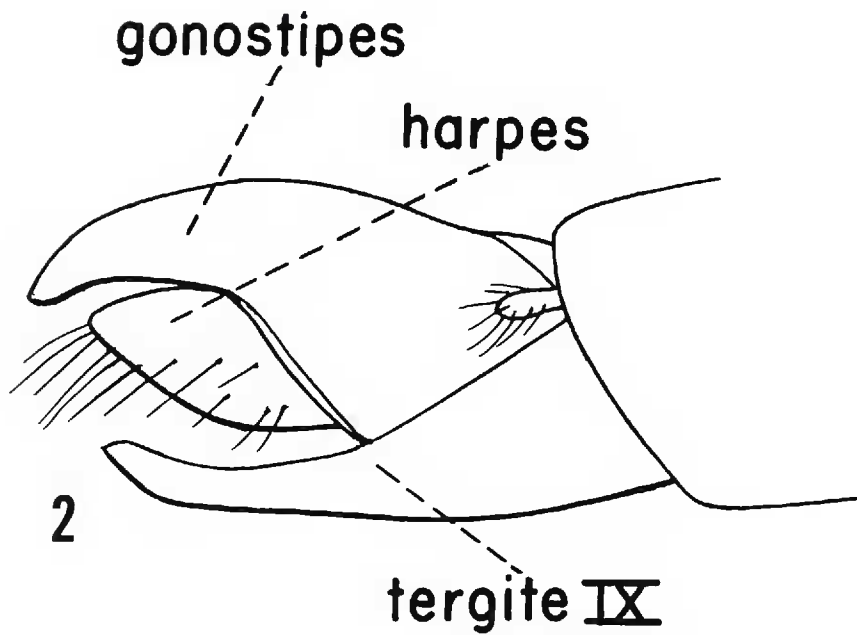
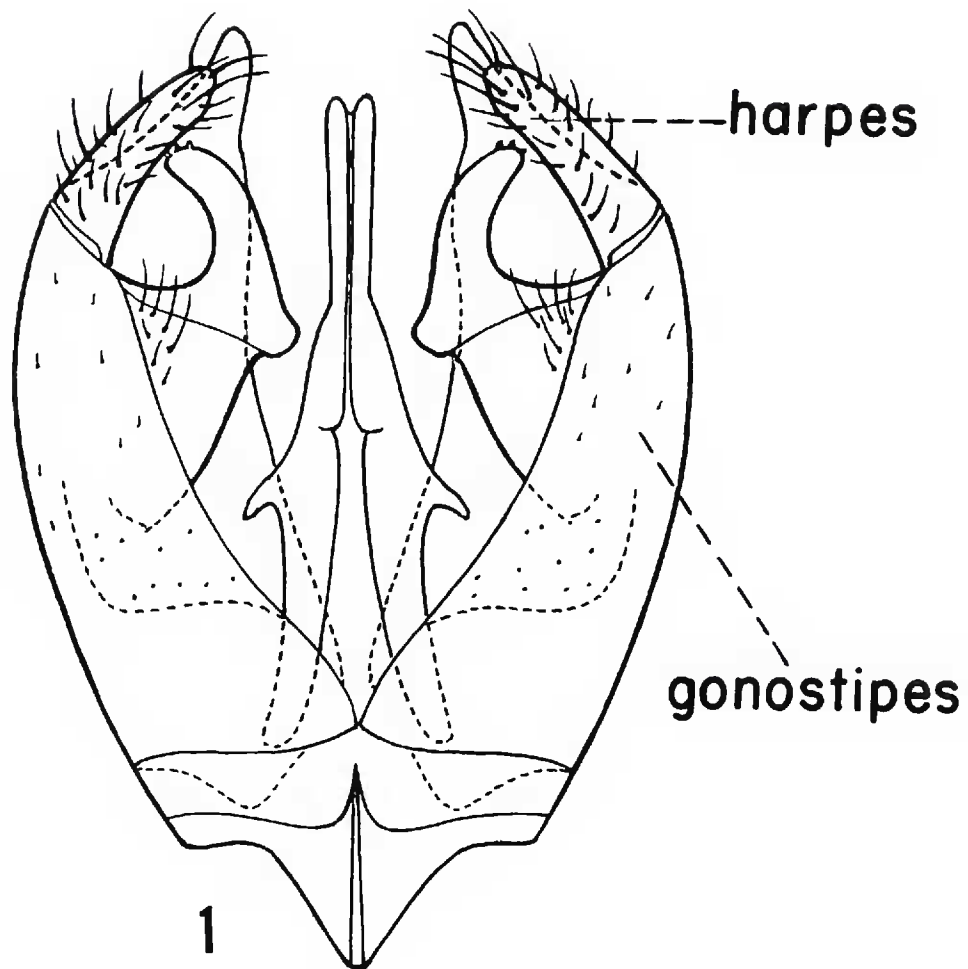
Dr. H. H. Ross has informed me that there is a specimen at Urbana with an old C. C. Adams number for which they were never able to obtain data. Dr. B. D. Burks confirmed that only the two females previously referred to, and one other tattered female from the stomach of a nighthawk, are at the U. S. National Museum.

The present specimens vary greatly in size, a phenomenon quite common in some other wood-boring Hymenoptera and Coleoptera, notably siricids and cerambycids. Females range from 4.6 to 13.3 mm in length (head to tip of tergite X) and the males 7.7 to 9 mm. Rohwer (1915) reported the length of the holotype female as 8 mm.

Syntaxis, in common with a number of other insects which attack recently dead or dying trees, is apparently attracted to forest burn areas soon after late summer or early fall forest fires. The series of males taken by Wickman at Viola was collected either on sticky bands placed on the trunks, or crawling over the bark of several species of pine, white fir, and incense cedar immediately following a fire. The tree trunks were still warm and smoking at the time of collection. The four females taken by Litsinger in the South Fork District of Modoc National Forest were taken on burned timber 1 day following a burn.

The three females reared from *Libocedrus* came from a tree which had been burned in the Montgomery Creek forest fire in August 1961. It was cut the following summer and they emerged in August 1962. It therefore appears that the life cycle can be completed in 1 year.

¹ Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, U.S.D.A., Berkeley.



EXPLANATION OF FIGURES

Figs. 1 and 2, Genitalia of male *Syntexis libocedrii* Rohwer: 1, ventral view; 2, lateral view.

Since the male has previously been unknown, the following description is given:

MALE.—Mandibles and legs beyond middle of femora, except apical tarsal segments, brownish (rufo-testaceous). A narrow line on inner orbits from middle of eye to anterior malar space and continuing as a broader band from posterior malar space on posterior orbits along eye margin to level of the top of the eye; a narrow line on posterior margin of pronotum which terminates at the posterior lateral angles and then continues on the posterior lateral margin as a very narrow line; a narrow line on the lateral posterior margins of all abdominal tergites, extending around margins of the lateral abdominal tergites; and a narrow, apical line on all abdominal sternites, straw-white. Remainder of appendages and body, black.

Except for sexual differences, morphological features of head and body similar to female (*vide* Rohwer, 1915).

Genitalia as in Figs. 1 and 2. The peculiar crab-claw shape of the harpes and gonostipes is unlike the genitalia of any other sawfly known to me. There is no discernible gonomacula present.

New Locality Records (California):

MODOC CO.: Modoc National Forest, ♀, no date, in flight, No. 18247D (K. A. Salmon, Gerald Stage). South Fork District (26 miles south Alturas), Modoc National Forest, 4 ♀♀, 29 July 1960 (J. A. Litsinger, U.S.D.A.² and C.I.S.³). SHASTA CO.: Montgomery Creek, 3 ♀♀, emerged 18, 26 July 1962 from log sections of fire killed *Libocedrus decurrens* (B. E. Wickman, U.S.D.A. and C.I.S.). Viola, 8 ♂♂, 20, 21 July 1963, trapped on sticky bands or netted on trunks of *Libocedrus decurrens*, *Pinus ponderosa*, and *Abies concolor* (B. E. Wickman, U.S.D.A. and C.I.S.).

Rohwer (1915) placed *Syntaxis* in the family Cephidae but as pointed out by Benson (1935) it is more closely related to the Xiphydriidae, the two having similar antennae, mesopleurae, wing venation, and type of head. It differs from the Cephidae in a number of important aspects, such as having a genaponta instead of a maxaponta, possessing cenchri with the concomitant presence of the scaly patch on the base of the anterior wings, and lacking the constriction between the first and second abdominal segments. *Syntaxis* differs from Xiphydriidae, as pointed out by Ross (1937), in lacking the transverse suture of the mesoscutum, and in having a wide trench between the mesonotum and metanotum. It was on the basis of these and other differences that Benson (1935) raised *Syntaxis* to family rank. Additional support for this status can be found in the unique crab-claw formed by the gonostipes and harpes and the longitudinal suture-like line on the mid pronotum.

^{2, 3} Indicates present repository of specimens. U.S.D.A., Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, Berkeley; C.I.S., California Insect Survey, University of California, Berkeley.

LITERATURE CITED

- BENSON, ROBERT B. 1935. The genera of the Cephidae, and the erection of a new family Syntexidae (Hymenoptera, Symphyta). *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 16: 535-553, figs. 1-20.
- ROHWER, S. A. 1915. A remarkable new genus of Cephidae. *Proc. Entomol. Soc. Washington*, 17: 114-117, figs. 1-5.
- ROSS, H. H. 1937. A generic classification of the Nearctic sawflies. (Hymenoptera, Symphyta). *Illinois Biol. Monog.*, 15: 1-173, figs. 1-424.

ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE: Notice of proposed use of plenary powers in certain cases (A. [n.s.] 65).

In accordance with a decision of the 13th International Congress of Zoology, 1948, public notice is hereby given of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its plenary powers in connection with the following cases, full details of which will be found in *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, Vol. 21, Part 4, published on 16 October 1964.

- (7) Emendation to *Astraeus* of the generic name *Asthraeus* Laporte & Gory, 1837 (Insecta, Coleoptera). Z.N.(S.) 1628;
- (8) Validation of *Rhyncogonus* Sharp, 1885 (Insecta, Coleoptera). Z.N.(S.) 1629.

Any zoologist who wishes to comment on any of the above cases should do so in writing, and in duplicate, as soon as possible, and in any case before 16 April 1965. Each comment should bear the reference number of the case in question. Comments received early enough will be published in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Those received too late for publication will, if received before 16 April 1965, be brought to the attention of the Commission at the time of commencement of voting.

All communications on the above subject should be addressed as follows: The Secretary, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S. W. 7, England.—W. E. CHINA, *Acting Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*.